


Notwithstanding the foregoing, to comply fully with the restriction requirement, applicants elect with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, which includes claims 14-16, 18-20 and 24-26. Claims 17, 21-23, 27-40 have been withdrawn from consideration. Applicants respectfully acknowledge that, as stated in the Office Action, "if claim 14 as originally filed is part of an elected group and determined to be patentable, rejoinder of claims 14, 15 and 18-23 will be considered. The same applies to claims 16 and 17 with respect to the claims dependent therefrom." Applicants submit that the elected invention of Group I is in condition for allowance and respectfully request notice to this effect.

The Office Action further requires an election of a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Applicants submit that the two "species" in Figure 4 and Figures 5-8A have commonality that does not warrant an election.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, to comply fully with the restriction requirement, applicants elect with traverse to prosecute Species B corresponding to Figures 5 - 8A.

April 23, 2001

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles N.J. Ruggiero". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charles" being the most prominent.

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